

## How do UK based Internet Retailers become accredited?

Internet retailers of veterinary medicines will become accredited by showing they comply with the Accreditation Scheme and the Veterinary Medicines Regulations.

The VMD will initially assess:

- procedures/protocols for the selling of veterinary medicines via the internet; and
- an example of the sale of a veterinary medicine on the internet that demonstrates those procedures.

The VMD will record:

- the applicant's details (address and other related information etc)
- the premises details (trading name etc)
- the Responsible Qualified Person (RQP) details including Professional Body Membership No.
- details of the veterinary medicines sold.

The VMD will check to see that the Internet Retailer of veterinary medicines clearly displays on its website:

- the name of the owner of the business
- the address at which the business is conducted
- the name and qualification of the RQP(s)
- information on how to confirm the registration status of its online retail premises
- details of its complaints procedure and how to make a complaint to the VMD
- for Prescription Only Medicine – Veterinarian (POM-V), a statement that it may only be sold against a written prescription
- a link to the VMD's Adverse Event (Suspected Adverse Reaction Scheme) online yellow form
- a link to the VMD's Product Information Database.

The VMD will require an Internet Retailer to sign a declaration that it has read and understood:

- Veterinary Medicines Guidance Note 3 – *Guidance for Retailers*,
- Veterinary Medicines Guidance Note 4 – *Controls on Advertising*, and
- that all advertisements on its website comply with the current Veterinary Medicines Regulations.

## How will on-site inspections be carried out?

Following accreditation, Inspectors will carry out an on-site inspection of accredited Internet Retailers' premises to check that retailers still comply with the Accreditation Scheme and the Veterinary Medicines Regulations.

## How will the VMD deal with an Internet Retailer who stops meeting our standards?

The VMD will withdraw accreditation and use of the logo from any Internet Retailer who is not complying with the Accreditation Scheme and the Veterinary Medicines Regulations.

## What else does the VMD do to make sure Internet Retailers of veterinary medicines comply with the Veterinary Medicines Regulations?

The VMD's inspectors carry out routine visits to the premises of suppliers of veterinary medicines, including those that sell veterinary medicines on-line, to check that the business complies with the legislation.

The VMD's Enforcement Team acts on complaints it receives about internet retailers.

When appropriate, Defra's Investigation Services investigates allegations of illegal activities relating to the importation, supply and administration of veterinary medicines.

**You can also 'phone the VMD on 01932 336911 for any additional assistance about veterinary medicines, or visit our website at [www.vmd.defra.gov.uk](http://www.vmd.defra.gov.uk)**

**You can also e-mail us at: [postmaster@vmd.defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:postmaster@vmd.defra.gsi.gov.uk)**

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VMD/Leaflet



ASSURING THE SAFETY, QUALITY & EFFICACY OF VETERINARY MEDICINES



**Helping You to Buy Safe and Effective Veterinary Medicines on the Internet – the VMD's Accredited Internet Retailer Scheme**



The Veterinary Medicines Directorate is an Executive Agency of the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs

[www.vmd.defra.gov.uk](http://www.vmd.defra.gov.uk)

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# About the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD)

The VMD is an Executive Agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).

The VMD authorises veterinary medicines and continues to monitor their quality, safety and efficacy following authorisation. The VMD is responsible for the Veterinary Medicines Regulations (VMR) which set out UK controls on veterinary medicines. The VMD inspects premises in the UK that manufacture, distribute and supply veterinary medicines including internet retailers to ensure they comply with the VMR. More details about the work of the VMD are on the VMD's website ([www.vmd.defra.gov.uk](http://www.vmd.defra.gov.uk)).



## Why is the VMD introducing the Accredited Internet Retailer Scheme?

The Accredited Internet Retailer Scheme (launched on 25 May 2012) is the VMD's way of facilitating self regulation by UK based Internet Retailers selling veterinary medicines classified as:

- Prescription Only Medicine – Veterinarian (POM-V)<sup>1</sup>,
- Prescription Only Medicine – Veterinarian, Pharmacist, Suitably Qualified Person (SQP) (POM-VPS)<sup>2</sup>
- Non-Food Animal – Veterinarian, Pharmacist, SQP (NFA-VPS)<sup>3</sup>.

It is a voluntary scheme and is free of charge.

## Why is the VMD facilitating self regulation?

The VMD is facilitating self regulation as a response to concerns about the increase in the number of internet retailers and the extent to which they comply with the Veterinary Medicines Regulations (VMR).

Whilst the majority of websites based in the UK are run by qualified professionals, some sites breach the VMR by selling veterinary medicines:

- without the advice of a veterinary surgeon, pharmacist or Suitably Qualified Person<sup>4</sup>
- that are not authorised for use in animals in the UK.

### 1 POM-V

A veterinary medicine that has been classified as a POM-V has to be prescribed by a veterinary surgeon following a clinical assessment of an animal, or group of animals, under the veterinary surgeon's care and may only be supplied to the client by a vet or a pharmacist.

### 2 POM-VPS

A veterinary medicine that has been classified as POM-VPS may be prescribed by any Registered Qualified Person (RQP – a veterinarian, a pharmacist or a SQP). A clinical assessment of the animal(s) is not required when prescribing this category of veterinary medicine and the animal does not have to be seen by the prescriber. However sufficient information about the animal and the way it is kept must be known to the prescriber in order to prescribe and supply appropriately.

### 3 NFA-VPS

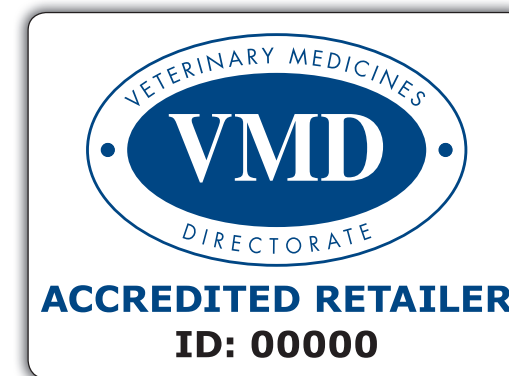
A veterinary medicine that has been classified as NFA-VPS may be supplied by an RQP provided the requirements for supply are met. These medicines do not require a prescription.

### 4 SQP

An SQP is a professionally qualified person who is entitled to prescribe and/or supply certain veterinary medicines under the Veterinary Medicines Regulations

## How does an Internet Retailer show its customers it has been accredited under this scheme?

The VMD is issuing Internet Retailers who have met the accreditation scheme's requirements with a logo to indicate their accreditation. Internet Retailers can then display the logo on their website. The logo contains a unique number. Customers can confirm accreditation by clicking on the logo to access the Internet Retailer database on the VMD's website.



## How will the scheme help you?

The VMD's Accredited Internet Retailer Scheme will help you as an on-line buyer of veterinary medicines by:

- showing you that the retailer has voluntarily applied for and has been granted accreditation
- confirming that the VMD has inspected the website and found that it complies with the Accreditation Scheme's requirements and the Veterinary Medicines Regulations
- reducing the risk of you buying unauthorised veterinary medicines
- reducing the risk of you buying inappropriate or ineffective veterinary medicines for your animals.